

HOW I LOST A FORTUNE.

An Incident in the Trial of One of the Conspirators who Plotted the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln.

By COL. CHARLES H. BLINN

ON THE nineteenth day of November, 1864, I was mustered out of the service of the United States as a private soldier in Company A, First Regiment, Vermont Cavalry. I had served three years and four months during the rebellion. I had seen grim war in all its varied phases; had been in some of the great battles; in many of the long marches and campaigns of the Army of the Potomac; had been a prisoner of war at Lynchburg and Belle Island, and was more than willing to quit.

The Battle of Cedar Creek was fought on the nineteenth of October, 1864, and the great victory of Sheridan (snatched from the defeat of Wright) in the early morning when he was driven back several miles) pre-empted the collapse of the rebellion. All the winter of 1864, Grant was hammering away at Peterburg. Sherman was making that wonderful march to the sea, and Thomas had sealed the fate of Hood at the battle of Nashville. The mighty Mississippi was flowing, untroubled, to the sea. The armies of the South were exhausted and discouraged, ill fed, ill clothed, and without hope of further recruiting. Every evidence was in the air that the inevitable end was rapidly approaching.

On the 6th of April, 1865, the greatest general of the confederacy, Robert E. Lee, disheartened and broken in spirit, and weary worn, heard the immortal Grant utter, under the apple tree of Appomattox, the expression, "Let us have Peace."

The dark cloud of war which had hung over the country for four years had been pierced by the angel of peace. Beneath the daisies were sleeping, careless of the voice of the morning, three hundred thousand men. On crutches and with empty sleeves were a half million more. Gettysburg, Vicksburg, Cold Harbor, Antietam, Shiloh, the Wilderness and Chickamauga, were forever recorded in history, the cause of which one side believed, and the other side knew was right, while over all the bloody years was written the word "Silence."

In the midst of the rejoicing, while church bells were clanging and bands were playing the anthem of peace, the great master-mind, the supreme leader, Abraham Lincoln, was assassinated. Gloom fell upon the land. A diabolical plot to murder the president, vice-president, secretaries Seward, Stanton and others, was laid bare to the appalled country. The plot of the malefactors was as follows: John Wilkes Booth was assigned to murder the president; Lewis Powell, alias Payne, to murder Secretary Seward; George Atzerodt, a Confederate spy, was to murder Vice-President Andrew Johnson; David E. Herold, a young drug clerk, was assigned as a page for Booth. Others in the conspiracy were Samuel Arnold and Michael O'Laughlin, Confederate soldiers, and John H. Surratt. The plot was hatched at the house of Mary E. Surratt, mother of John.

The conspirators, except Booth who was shot ten days later, and John H. Surratt, who escaped, were tried by a military court, and in May Mrs. Surratt, Payne, Herold and Atzerodt were hanged. After the close of the war, I entered the Vermont Central Railroad office at Burlington. My duties were performed at night. The government had offered one hundred thousand dollars reward for the capture of any one of the assassins. My work being at night, and in a railroad office, I was constantly on the watch for suspicious characters, and yet not so officiously on the watch as I imagined.

The station in which I was employed was at a wharf, and not at the regular passenger depot. The ice in Lake Champlain broke up about the middle of April. On the 16th the first steamer of the season arrived. The landing was made at about two o'clock in the morning.

When the gang plank was run out, one solitary passenger came ashore and walked into the station. He was a tall, rather thin man, his throat tightly muffled, his complexion pale and sickly. A bright fire was burning in the stove, which he approached eagerly and with outstretched hands. Then he turned to me and asked politely if I had any objection to his remaining in the station until his train left for Montreal, over the Canadian border at four o'clock, two hours later.

"It's against our rules, sir," I said, "to allow passengers to remain in the station." I hesitated, as I spoke, for the man looked weary and half sick, and it was some distance to the depot in the town.

The stranger made further appeal to remain, explaining that he was on his way home from a hospital where he had been confined for many months with a severe illness. In interesting detail, he related some of his experiences, and his story sounded so plausible that my sympathy was aroused, and I consented to his remaining, though the station was a freight instead of a passenger depot. In thanking me, he explained that it was good to get home again, meaning that Canada was his "home." In spite of his fatigue, he held my attention for some time with a lively account of his experience "in the states." His manner was cordial and friendly, his conversation very entertaining, his whole demeanor that of a gentleman. He finally stretched himself on the hard bench in the room, as if exhausted, though he continued talking good naturedly, with his head resting on his arm. I went into the office, and on my return saw that he had fallen asleep. The man had made such an appalling impression on me that I tipped about my duties, with caution, lest I should awaken him. In response, he looked emaciated and sick, and his wretched appearance really bore out his story that he had

just come from a hospital, I aroused him, with some pity, when the train pulled in. He awoke, as I remembered afterwards, in much agitation. He started and stared expression which crossed his face for a second I can still see.

It was day break when I finished my station duties and prepared to go home. In crossing the outer office, a bit of white paper under the bench caught my eye, and I stooped and picked up a handkerchief. I was startled to see clearly written across its corner the name "John H. Surratt," the man at whose mother's house the plot to assassinate Lincoln had been hatched.

Quicker than wind I flew to the telephone office, and sent the following message:

"Carroll T. Hobart, Conductor, Montreal Express, St. Albans, Vt.—John H. Surratt on your train. \$100,000 reward. Answer."

"CHAS. H. BLINN."

The breathless anxiety of the next half hour can be better imagined than expressed, but the answer finally came:

"Train crossed the border fifteen minutes ago."

Thus went glimmering the basis of what doubtless would have made me today a second Rockefeller.

John H. Surratt entered a monastery near Montreal, where he remained for six months. He then fled to Europe, where, two years later he was discovered by detectives who had scoured the world for him. He was serving on the papal guard at Rome, and was apprehended, extradited and brought to the United States in a war vessel, June, 1867.

The trial took place at Washington. I was subpoenaed to attend, and journeyed from St. Albans, Vt., to do so. On my arrival, the leading counsel for Surratt sent for me and offered a large sum of money if I would change my testimony and the date of my meeting with Surratt to a later date. I declined the offer. After waiting more than three weeks in Washington, I was called to the witness stand.

More than two weeks were consumed in obtaining a jury, which, when selected, was a motley lot; an unbiased person would have declared they would never agree on a conviction. Surratt had changed very little since I saw him at the railroad station in Vermont. He was ably defended by Judge Richard T. Merrick, one of the best known lawyers of his time. The trial dragged for nearly two months, and after two days' deliberation the jury disagreed.

The war bitterness of two years before had in a certain sense been mellowed by time, and the fact that the prisoner's mother had been hanged with the other conspirators had influenced public opinion to a degree. Surratt was admitted to bail, and after a year or more the case was dropped from the calendar, and doubtless from memory.

THE MENACE IN BURMA, INDIA

The Menace goes to the ends of the earth and is found in the isles of the sea, and everywhere receives commendation and approval. Strange, is it not, that even in far off India the Roman power and influence is feared and felt. Here is what U. Dhamma-oka (Buddhist) of Tavoy Kyung, Rangoon, Burma, says:

"Dear Sir: It gives me pleasure when I read your noble paper that is now engaged in one of the greatest struggles for the liberty of the people since the days of President Lincoln. Pope Pius X. is at the head of this terrible Roman octopus. More power to you and may you receive a million subscribers to your noble and fearless little paper, The Menace."

"I remain yours fraternally." This gentleman recognizes the Roman Catholic church as a foe to liberty and free institutions. Whence came he by this knowledge? Did you think that The Menace was making up a case against Rome; that our complaint was groundless, our fear, fanaticism and our fight against an imaginary foe? O, no, it is only some American—too many people—it is true who think the hierarchy a highly fed, pretentious but harmless people playing at religion with street parades, and that is all.

It's a real menace, a foe to American institutions and liberty. Far off India even knows it if you do not.

Wake up.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER, EH?

By the queerest circumstances two new exchanges found their way to our desk the other day—both coming in on the same mail.

It recalled to our minds the proverb about the "birds of a feather," etc. The two distinguished journals were none other than "The Menace" (which, by the way, is most appropriately named) and "The Issue"—the latter being the official organ of the Socialist party in Maine. We have heard and read much in our Catholic exchanges regarding the first named paper, which hails from Missouri, but until we laid eyes on it could we be convinced that the United States government would allow such a vile sheet to pass through our mails unheeded. As for The Issue, we promptly passed judgment on its value with the result that it was quickly consigned to the waste basket. However before doing so, we noticed the advertisement of a well known Catholic printing firm of Portland on one of its pages. A Catholic firm advertising in a Socialist paper! Preposterous!—Catholic Opinion, Lewiston Maine.

THE MENACE SUB CARDS

The Menace sub cards are U. S. postal cards, printed and all ready for mailing. Each card is good for one year's subscription to The Menace and it is the most convenient yet devised for handling subscriptions. They can be had for 25 cents each in lots of four or more. Order sub cards and save postage and the work of correspondence.

A YEAR OF MOURNING.

THE close of 1911 marked the close of what was designated by Pope Pius himself as a year of mourning for the Catholic church. A review of the conditions which the church had to face during the past year in various European countries indicates also that the year was one of mourning for the church in other respects than that which Pope Pius had in mind when he so designated it.

It was early in 1911 that Pope Pius announced that the church would observe the entire year as one of sadness; that no great function would take place either at the Vatican or at St. Peter's and that in every way possible the church and the holy see would endeavor to make the world realize the position to which the church has been subjected by so-called spoliation of its temporal rights by the new kingdom of Italy.

This was decided upon because of the celebrations and expositions which Italy held last year in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of the taking of Rome and the papal states from the holy see.

Pope Pius in his address before the consistory held on November 27, again called the attention of the cardinals of the Sacred College, as well as the entire world, to the fact that the year had continued to the last one of mourning for the church.

During the year 1911 it was pointed out that the church has suffered perhaps more persecutions and more hostility in the various European countries than during any previous year of its history. In France, for instance, it was pointed out that the work of driving the religious orders out of the country progressed steadily; that the various religious houses and congregations were forced to close; that the country churches were allowed to fall into disrepair and that in every way possible Catholic education was prevented.

In Portugal, the law of separation, conceded to be one of the most drastic measures that has been passed against the church in centuries, continued in full operation. Under it at least three bishops, including the patriarch of Lisbon, were driven from their dioceses, while other acts hostile to the church continued without number.

No Progress in Spain

In Spain, there was a slight let up in the opposition to Catholics, yet with the exception of the eucharistic congress at Madrid, at which the king himself attended thus showing his loyalty to the holy see, there was nothing there to cause the church to rejoice.

In Russia, also, the church met with the most bitter persecution. It was necessary to notify the czar that unless these persecutions ceased the holy see would sever its diplomatic relations with Russia, an act which might result in an uprising of many of the discontented Catholic provinces. This was in a measure effective but less violent persecutions continued throughout the year such as the criminal prosecution of priests for administering the sacrament.

Despite these conditions, it is pointed out that the church has continued to grow steadily during the past year. There was hardly a month that the pope did not have occasion

to create new prefectures, vicariates and dioceses while the recent rehabilitation of the Sacred College served again to show the full strength of the church.

As a consequence it is predicted in Vatican circles that having thus fulfilled his self-imposed task of serving the year 1911 as one of mourning, Pope Pius will endeavor to more than compensate for it during the coming year by a full resumption of the big religious ceremonies at St. Peter's and the Vatican.

But whatever the pope may do, or may not do, will have no effect on the results in store for Catholicism. The reason for persecution, as the pope is wont to term it, are pointed out in The Menace from week to week. It is not persecution, but it is an intelligent demand on the part of an educated and enlightened people that the last vestige of barbarism and isolation be wiped from the face of the earth. And it will be.

LINCOLN ON WOMAN SUFFRAGE

"I go for all abating the privileges of the government who assist in bearing its burdens. Consequently, I go for admitting all whites to the right of suffrage who pay taxes or bear arms, by no means excluding females."—Abraham Lincoln.

How many persons know that Abraham Lincoln believed in letting women vote?

Not only did he believe in woman's suffrage, but he openly declared himself in favor of it and made it the principal plank in his platform when he was a candidate for the legislature in Illinois in 1836.

The quotation printed above is from a letter written by Mr. Lincoln to the editor of the New Salem (Ill.) Journal on June 12, 1836, setting forth the principles upon which he sought reelection. The declaration in favor of woman's suffrage comes first in this letter. Then follows a declaration in favor of local improvements. That is all. On that platform he was elected.

This letter to the New Salem paper shows that Mr. Lincoln believed in allowing women to vote even before he believed in giving the ballot to negroes.

THREE BOOKS BARRED

Rome, Jan. 29.—A decree was issued by the congregation of the index today, placing the following books on the index expurgatories, and all Catholics are forbidden to read them: "Ancient History of the Church," by Monsignor Duchesne, a member of the French Academy and director of the French Classical school at Rome; "Letters in His Holiness Pius X.," by "Modernist," published in Chicago, in 1910, and "The History of Modernism in New England," also by "Modernist" and issued in Boston in 1911. If "Modernist" is a priest he is bound to give in his submission at once or be excommunicated.

Pius has evidently heard of the "awful" book, "Letters to His Holiness."—Ed.]

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The Menace Book List

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Anti-Catholic Post Cards—Six, different kinds, 10 cents a dozen or 70 cents a hundred, assorted.

The Priest in Absolution—The very depths of Romish confessional filth is unmasked in this book. Price 25c.

The Friar's Daughter—A story of the American occupation of the Philippines and the Friar's land deal. 114 pages. 25c.

Sister Lucy and Her Awful Disclosures—Showing that convents are inimical to chastity, virtue and freedom. Price 20c.

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Crimes of Priests—By Wm. Lloyd Clark. A condensed review by Roman priests in the United States. It is a great missionary document. Price 10c.

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The Secret Institutions of the Jesuits—Reprint from an edition of 1773, of which society of Jesuits on the continent suppressed all copies obtainable. Price 25c.

Christopher Columbus and Columbus Day—A discussion from the Spokane Daily Chronicle, republished in The Menace, No. 35, now in pamphlet form. Price 5 cents.

Priestly Celibacy Exposed—A lecture by the Rev. George Townsend Fox, of Durham, England, showing the result of the Roman decrees that priests should not marry. Price 25c.

Maria Monk—The terrible disclosure of black nunnery. This book is the one to place in the hands of parents who become traitors by sending their girls to convent schools. Price 10 cents.

Letters to His Holiness Pius X., by a Modernist—The book that caused the pope to administer the "Modernist Oath" to every Catholic priest in the world. 320 pages. Beautifully cloth bound. Price \$1.25.

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Diaz, the Dictator—A story of a remarkable life. Of special interest is proof that Lincoln issued a proclamation in February, 1865, which sealed the doom of the "hierarchy Catholic monarchy" in Mexico and within two months was assassinated 125 pages, paper, 25c.

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Above prices include postage. Send orders to THE MENACE, Aurora, Mo.

NOWAK CASE STILL DRAGS.

Milwaukee, Wis., Jan. 27.—Judge N. B. Washburn Friday afternoon took the case of Father Matthew Nowak, assistant pastor of St. Joseph's church, charged with assault and battery upon Johnny Stoltz, under advisement for ten days.

Father Nowak, a big 180 pound man, is charged with lashing Johnny Stoltz, aged 12, with a cat-o-nine tails three times across the legs and then compelling him to kneel ten minutes on the floor for being late at low mass. It was alleged that the boy's knee was severely injured as a result and that he has been compelled to keep it in a cast most of the time since.

The parents of the boy assert that it was the whipping that caused the injury. The defense has brought in witnesses to prove that the boy walked several miles the day after the whipping and that he had played in several rough games with his playmates.

Assistant District Attorney Leo Reitman severely grilled Father Nowak in his talk to the judge, characterizing the assault as "brutal and cowardly." He called attention to the attitude of the priest in the courtroom, where he had interrupted the attorney during the course of the trial, and was rebuked by the judge.

Mr. Reitman said: "This man seems to think that because of his priestly calling, he can take the law in his own hands"—at which the priest nodded vigorously.

The plea of Attorney Christian Doerfler for his client was directed largely against the vigorous action and language of the district attorney in the prosecution of the case. Mr. Doerfler claimed that the decision of the courts have given to school teachers "the same kind of discretion that is possessed by the courts," in that they are allowed to use their discretion in inflicting punishment, and are not expected to be infallible in their judgment. He referred to the character of the people from whom the parents of the child came as being "of the lower class, who are of a low grade of intelligence, and who know no other form of punishment but corporal punishment."

He intimated to the court that "we must take judicial notice of the fact that nearly one-half of the population of this country is made up of the members of this denomination, and that they have much to do with making up public opinion."—The Milwaukee Leader.

Readers of The Menace will remember that this case was given publicity in our columns at the time the crime was committed, and on two or three occasions since. This is the third time this criminal has been arraigned and had his case taken "under advisement" by the judge, and it looks as if justice in this case is to be defeated by Jesuitical intrigue.

It will also be remembered that the Stoltz family was excommunicated from the Catholic church for bringing suit against this criminal priest. This was done in lieu of a recent edict from Pope Pius X., to the effect that no layman should bring suit in a court of law against a Roman prelate without the consent of the bishops and higher church dignitaries. This, of course, means that suit will never be brought in such cases, unless the one bringing it should act as Stoltz did—that is have the courage and manhood to defy the pagan prince on the altar, throw off the yoke of ecclesiastical slavery and demand justice regardless of consequences.

AN ATROCIOUS CRIME

Roman Catholic Priest Strangles Brother After Giving Absolution and Steals Jewels of "Black Virgin."

Czenstochau, Russian Poland, Jan. 27.—An ecclesiastical scandal, entailing fratricide, robbery of the jewels of the famous "Black Virgin" of this city, the elopement of a monk with a notorious woman, and the organization of a dissolute circle of monks in the Pauline Monastery of Czenstochau, is expected to be revealed in court next month, when Father Damazy Macoch is placed on trial, accused of theft and homicide.

The case is attracting enormous interest throughout Poland. Its commencement dates back nearly three years, when discovery was made one morning that the magnificent jeweled offerings to the "Black Virgin" in the Czenstochau Roman Catholic cathedral, were missing.

The Virgin, formed out of ebony, is one of the most famous ecclesiastical statues in the world. It is said to have been made by Saint Luke, and is credited with many marvels of miracle workings. It is visited yearly by 200,000 pilgrims, and gifts valued at \$3,000,000 adorned the statue, having been sent by popes, emperors, kings, and private individuals throughout many centuries. Among the jewels was a crown, given by Pope Clement in 1719, valued at \$50,000, and a superb pearl embroidered robe, of almost priceless workmanship.

With the disappearance of the jewels went Father Damazy Macoch, of the Pauline Monastery. The priest took with him a beautiful woman of the town, Helena Ostrowska, and the two lived together in Warsaw, unsuspected, for a year. They spent money lavishly, and were regarded as millionaires.

Murders His Brother
Then the priest apparently wanted to get rid of his companion. He induced her to marry his brother, Wacław Macoch, a postman. After the marriage the woman told her husband that Damazy had robbed the statue of the Virgin.

Damazy learned he had been betrayed, and believing his liberty was in danger, he resolved to get rid of his brother. He persuaded him to drink a glass of drugged wine, while the two were alone together, and then struck him on the head with a hatchet. The blow was not fatal, and the priest thereupon in ghastly mockery, administered absolution to his

brother, and choked him to death. He sewed the body in a sack and hired a wagon driver to cart it to the river Warthe and sink it. The wagon driver was convinced a religious rite was being performed.

Later, the priest was arrested in Austrian Poland and was taken back to Czenstochau, where he has been awaiting trial. His demeanor throughout his arrest has been nonchalant.

He confessed to his crime and made a further confession that his fellow monks in Czenstochau had long been pilfering the jewels from the statue of the Virgin. Many of the gems he took with him, he said, turned out to be glass, which had been substituted for the real jewels by previous robbers.

The monks, declared Macoch, were accustomed to appropriate the offerings to the Virgin to their own use and, disguised as laymen, they frequently expended the proceeds outside the monastery on debauches and dissolute living.

Many Monks Jailed

A search of the monastery, after Macoch's confession, led to the discovery of many jewels originally belonging to the Virgin's statue, which had been hidden by the inmates. Some of the monks were imprisoned, and a complete change was made in the administrative force of the monastery.

Other jewels were discovered yesterday, valued at \$50,000, in the store of a jeweler at Lemberg. The discovery was accidental. Government secret service police were searching the premises of a jeweler at Lühlin, near Warsaw, for nihilist correspondence. They found in the house a clue to the missing Virgin's gems, which took them to Lemberg and led to the recovery of a part of Macoch's booty.

Beside Macoch, his woman companion is under arrest, while the police are holding an alleged accomplice, Father Kreczowski.

After the Macoch theft Pope Pius, in 1910, sent a new crown to the Virgin, valued at \$55,000. It was placed on the statue with great ceremony, an archbishop, eight bishops and one thousand priests from all parts of Poland and Germany being present. Half a million pilgrims watched the proceedings, which took place in the Pauline Monastery, the statue being carried afterward to the high altar of the cathedral by a guard of 2,000.

The Virgin is now cared for by a company of secular religious workers, the former guardianship of the Pauline Fathers having been removed by ecclesiastical decree.

FATHER SHANNON GETS GAY.

The Reverend Father Thomas V. Shannon, assistant pastor of St. Malachy's Roman Catholic church in Chicago, was a City club guest recently, and had something to say on the school question, which is coming up constantly as the Catholics are feeling the pulse of the people to ascertain how soon it will be safe to strike for a division of the school fund, a part of it to go toward the support of parochial schools.

"The Catholics have fifty-seven per cent of the vote of Chicago," he said. "Do you blame them for feeling some grievance against the state when they are taxed to maintain the public schools, and send their children to parochial schools, which receive absolutely no financial assistance from the state or city?"

To which we might reply that if they don't like the American system of taxation they can emigrate to Rome.

The American free school system is the best in the world. They are open for Catholics the same as any other class, and if they are too silly and too bigoted to take advantage of them, it's not the fault of the system.

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When Comptroller Frendergast of New York, discovered and announced the fact that the alleged charitable institutions of the Roman Catholic church in that city making a snug profit out of the money paid for the care of the city's wards, the counsel for the Romish graft replied that if the nuns, who do the work in those institutions, were paid the usual wages for their labor there would be no profit. To be sure. The over-fed and smooth-groomed priests are not only grafting off the city, but are speculating on the simple faith and blind devotion of their own people, the nuns. The nuns do all the creditable work but the higher-ups get the credit and the pay. That is the working of what is termed "the fine Italian hand."

In Germany the Romanists have a political party and openly fight for supremacy. In this country where they are weak they have no party but cunningly use their votes for their kind on any ticket and thus have five times their relative political power. We should not have an anti-Catholic party now but should scratch every Romanist on every ticket. This will prevent their being nominated by Protestant communities.